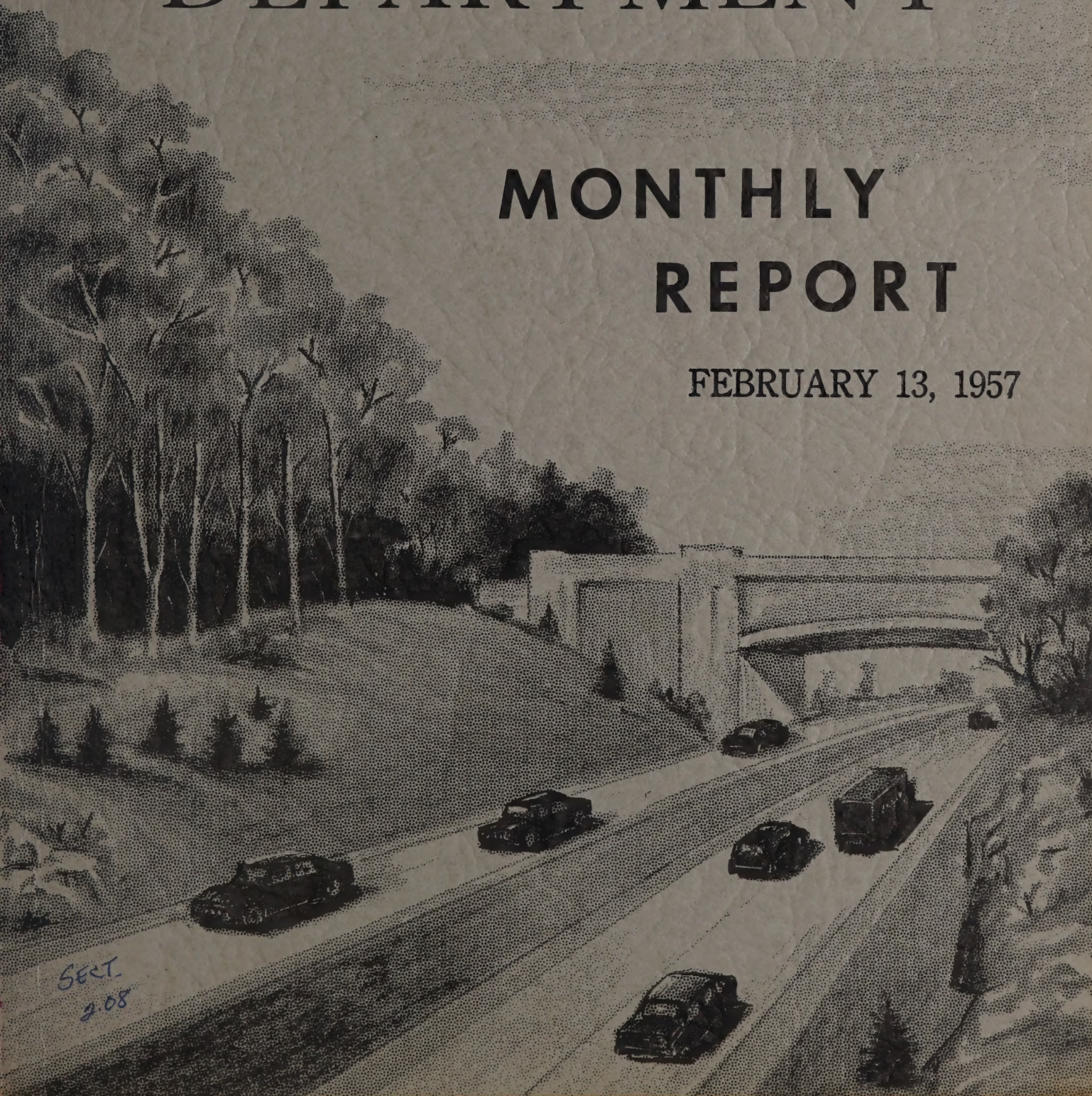


STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

MONTHLY REPORT

FEBRUARY 13, 1957



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ESSEX EAST-WEST FREEWAY

We met during the past month with the Regional Engineer for the Bureau of Public Roads, and the District Engineer for the Bureau, and generally discussed the federal highway program. We put special emphasis on inclusion of the Essex East-West Freeway in the 90-10 interstate route category. By our connecting this proposed route with Route 46 in East Hanover Township on the west and the Holland and Lincoln Tunnels on the East, it would appear the chances of success in having it included in the federal interstate system are reasonably good. In any event, we expect a final decision from the Federal Bureau before too long.

BERGEN-PASSAIC EXPRESSWAY

At our meeting with officials of the Bureau of Public Roads, the Regional Engineer indicated that we could look to immediate approval of our proposed Bergen-Passaic Expressway alignment from Teaneck Road, Teaneck, in Bergen County, to its connection with Route 46 in Wayne Township, Passaic County.

Once forthcoming, this approval will permit us to make an early start on development of our right-of-way property plans and construction drawings permitting us to start property acquisition this summer.

Alignment of the Expressway in the Leonia, Englewood and Fort Lee area still remains undecided, with the federal people still in possession of the ball.

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Mayor Allen, of Leonia, recently publicized an alignment of his liking that would place the Expressway even further to the north than we had proposed and would bring it in close proximity to existing Route 4.

At the time of our last meeting with Mayor Allen and his associates he presented this line and we informed him that we gravely doubted the acceptability of such a plan on two counts:

(1) We had already moved our proposed line northerly to the borderline of Leonia and Englewood in order to better serve all the interests of the two municipalities at an increased cost of \$2.8 million. Were we to move further north this would again increase the cost of facility.

(2) Of equal importance is the fact that to move so close to Route 4 would cause the relocation to, in all practical senses, become a relocation of Route 4 and no longer serve to drain traffic off Route 46 or be of service to the areas presently served by both 4 and 46. Also such an alignment would increase the travel distance another one-half mile or so.

Nevertheless we promised Mayor Allen we would take the proposal under advisement and it is now being considered. In addition to not commending itself to us, preliminary reactions of the Federal Bureau's people indicates it has even less appeal to them than the Department's preferred line for which we have no approval to date.

PULASKI SKYWAY

The erection of the steel centerline barrier on the Pulaski Skyway is completed. Only the pouring of a concrete cap on the top of the divider remains to be finished this week, weather permitting.

It will be recalled that this project suffered a prolonged delay due to a jurisdictional labor dispute concerning whether the contractor would use laborers or steelworkers to drill holes through the concrete deck of the Skyway in order to anchor the barrier. This was resolved by late October and the Contractor went ahead with his work, using laborers to drill the holes and steelworkers to shift the template that marked the exact locations for drilling.

The basic 15-inch high steel barrier already has served its purpose, in that our people have been informed that it has been struck by vehicles which were deflected without major incident, and particularly, without loss of life.

A re-inspection of the synthetic rock asphalt surfacing of the Skyway that our maintenance forces completed early last November has shown it is standing up well.

BRIDGE RESURFACING

Within the next week or two, depending on the speed with which the federal Bureau of Public Roads can act, we anticipate advertising a

BRIDGE RESURFACING, continued

contract to apply bituminous concrete surface on five bridges on the Route 40 approaches to Atlantic City which currently have wood plank decks. The resurfacing will be somewhat unique in that a wire-mesh fabric will be incorporated in the bituminous concrete.

By using the mesh we hope to prevent cracking and pot-holing resulting from the underlying planks springing to any appreciable degree. Resurfacings without the mesh have failed to produce any satisfactory degree of permanency. Within a matter of a few weeks, or months at the most, cracks form despite regular preventive maintenance. Ultimately they enlarge to form holes that must be patched. The end result, in as short a period as year or two, is an uneven and unsatisfactory surface.

The Department's experiments with wire mesh in bituminous surfacing were conducted on Route 21, in Newark.

PERSONNEL TRAINING

This month we held a series of training sessions to bring our field construction inspectors and job supervisors in closer understanding with the standards and procedures used in laboratory testing of various materials used in highway construction.

These one-day sessions are held at our testing laboratory and consist of six half-hour lectures by top laboratory personnel followed by half-hour open discussion periods.

PERSONNEL TRAINING, continued

In order that all of our field people can be accommodated a total of nine such sessions is scheduled.

The objective of this training will be shown in the form of more representative samples being taken by our field people by reason of their knowing the processes that the sample will undergo. A compilation of all papers presented at the session will be mimeographed and distribution should prove very helpful to new employees in the future.

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL

Our maintenance people report very satisfactory results from the use of rock salt on the limited number of highway sections that our test equipment has concentrated on.

All indications point to the more extensive use of salt next season, also for possible purchase of bulk spreaders for efficient operation. Present spreading equipment is attached to the tail gates of our regular dump trucks as the need arises.

In conjunction with our studies of efficient distribution methods we are also watching closely for any possible harmful effects of salt on the pavement. Thus far there has been no negative reaction of any consequence.

ROUTE 17 SPEED SURVEY

As part of our continuing study of existing speed zones along state highways throughout the state our Planning and Traffic Bureau this month completed a survey of traffic speeds over the entire 26 mile length of Route 17. The results indicated there is no justification for lowering existing posted speed limits.

Using radar at 18 different locations our engineers clocked a total of 3,100 separate and free-moving vehicles and found that 85 percent of them were traveling between 50 and 46 miles per hour, or slower.

The decision to retain present speed limits was based on application of nationally accepted sampling and evaluation standards. Dropping the existing limits of any zone to a point where more than 15 percent of the using traffic would be in violation of the law is accepted nationally as an unrealistic policy that results in enforcement agencies being placed in a position of being unable to enforce the regulation.

Shortly after our decision was announced in the newspapers of that area there was a small amount of adverse reaction from one or two local officials along the route who had advocated lowering the speed limits.

PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT

In cooperation with the Ewing Township High School, six commercial

PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT, continued

students who will graduate from high school this June have been employed on a part-time basis. They will work from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., each weekday in assignments made throughout the Department in areas where the work load indicates a need for their abilities. In addition to providing valuable experience in clerical and stenographic work it is our aim to attract the best of these people to permanent employment with the Department.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Two public hearings on proposed highway alignments as required by the Federal Highway Act were held during January. On the 24th we explained our proposals for alignment of the Clinton By-pass on Route 22 at Clinton, Hunterdon County, and on the 30th went over the Route 21 alignment in Belleville, Essex County.

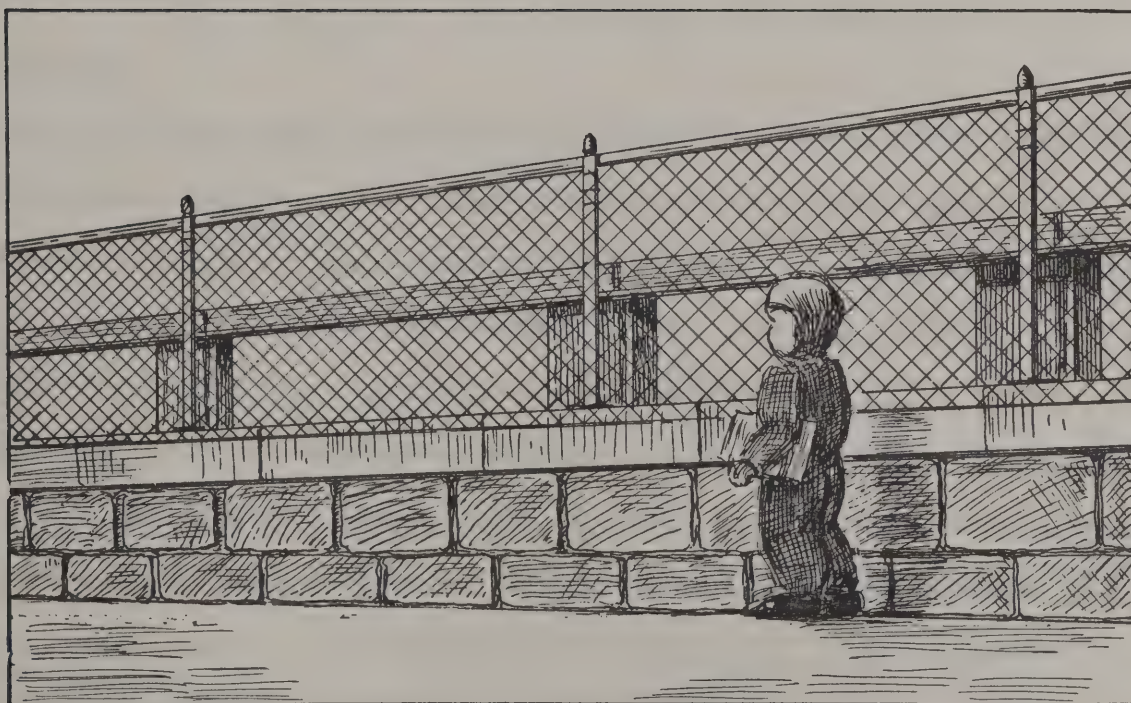
In each instance they were accompanied by a representative of the Federal Bureau of Public Roads and transcripts of the meetings will become a matter of record. Little opposition to the Department's proposals was encountered at either hearing.

COUNTY VISITS

Continuing our tour of the 21 counties we met with Senator Sharp, Assemblyman Gant and members of the Board of Freeholders in Bridgeton on February 8. As on other occasions we discussed our overall planning with particular emphasis on the Cumberland County planning.

COUNTY VISITS, continued

This was the 17th county visit we have completed. The remaining four counties - Hudson - Mercer - Middlesex and Union are scheduled for meetings in the near future.



The above illustrates protective fencing that the Highway Department will install on several of its Parkway bridges. See news release next page.

RELEASE WED. P.M., FEBRUARY 6.

Trenton, Feb. 6. - The New Jersey State Highway Department today announced its intention to install especially designed wire mesh fences on the parapets of all bridges overpassing the 13-mile toll-free section of the Garden State Parkway in Middlesex and Union Counties.

The fences will aid in preventing children from walking on the parapets or climbing the railings. They will extend four feet above the sidewalks and will be located on the inner face of railings and parapets.

While no accidents have been reported to date, State Highway Commissioner Dwight R. G. Palmer believes the installations are warranted by the increased pedestrian travel at all 12 overpasses. He said the work will be contracted for as soon as construction drawings for the entire project are completed.

In the interval the Commissioner urges all parents to cooperate with the State Highway Department in stopping the dangerous practice of walking on bridge parapets. This, he said, would include instances where adults are reported as assisting in the dangerous practice by holding the hands of small children.

Bridges to receive the safety treatment are at Galloping Hill Road, Centennial Avenue, Raritan Road, Westfield Avenue, Madison Hill Road, Inman Avenue, New Dover Road, Oak Tree Road, Route 27, Uniontown Road, Main Street, George Post Road.

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Fredrick, Feb. 5. - The New Jersey State Highway Department today announced its intention to install specially designed wide mesh fences on the parapets of all bridges overpassing the 13-mile toll-free section of the Garden State Parkway in Middlesex and Union Counties.

The fences will aid in preventing children from walking on the parapets or climbing the railings. They will extend four feet above the sidewalk and will be located on the inner face of railings and parapets.

While no accidents have been reported to date, State Highway Commissioner Dwight H. G. Falmer believes the installations are warranted by the increased pedestrian travel on all 13 overpasses. He said the work will be completed for as soon as construction drawings for the entire project are completed.

In the interval the Commissioner urges all parents to cooperate with the State Highway Department in stopping the dangerous practice of walking on bridge parapets. This, he said, would include instances where adults are reported as assisting in the dangerous practice by holding the hands of small children.

Bridges to receive the safety treatment are at Baltimore Hill Road, Central Avenue, Harrison Road, Westfield Avenue, Madison Hill Road, Linden Avenue, New Dover Road, Oak Tree Road, Route 27, Uniontown Road, Main Street, George Post Road.

